

LOCAL

# 'It can't stay like this, it just can't'; Ferguson protests turn violent with reports of shots fired, rocks and fireworks thrown at police

The protests left seven officers injured, county police said. Windows and doors at the Ferguson Police Department were broken and shattered

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FERGUSON, Mo. — A midnight curfew did not stop crowds from protesting for about eight hours outside the Ferguson Police Department Saturday night over the death of George Floyd. The protests left seven officers injured, county police said. As of Sunday morning, no arrests had been made.

At 1 a.m., St. Louis County police confirmed there were reports of shots fired in the area of the protests. The St. Louis County Police Department confirmed Sunday morning that "a significant amount of gunfire" happened throughout the night in the area, and one of its police or fire vehicles had been damaged by a bullet.

Video: Protests in Ferguson over George Floyd death | kSDK.com  
Just before 2 a.m., St. Louis County police said the [crowds had dispersed](#) and officers would remain on the scene to patrol the area throughout the night. Police have not said whether any arrests were made.

## Photos: Protests in Ferguson over George Floyd death



1/19

Credit: KSDK

The demonstration had been mostly peaceful, but around 10:30 p.m. the mood shifted.

"I think it's unnecessary, they have a good reason for what they're protesting for and I totally agree with it and support it, and I'm sure many of the police officers do too. Keeping it peaceful shows more power, it's something Martin Luther King stood behind, I stand behind and something I think these protesters should stand behind," said cleanup volunteer Noor Alyasiry.

On Your Side's Robert Townsend witnessed people in the crowd throwing items. He said tear gas was deployed. At times, fireworks could be seen exploding around the Ferguson Police Department. More officers with riot gear arrived to help.

"We want to be heard. As a black community, we need to be heard," one woman at the scene said.

Shouts of "Black Lives Matter" could be heard throughout the crowd.

Tear gas and rubber bullets were used by police in attempts to control the crowds of protesters.

**BREAKING**

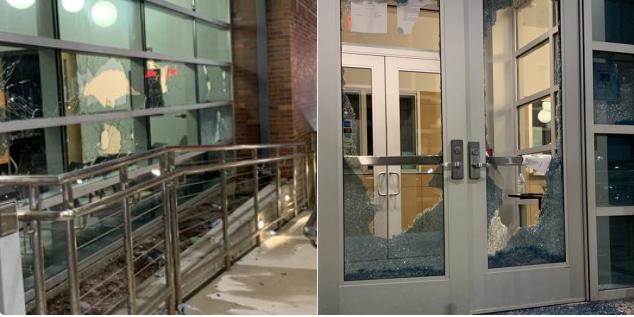
The county police department confirmed several people in the crowd shot off fireworks at officers and threw bricks, rocks and bottles at police.

"The windows at the Ferguson PD have been smashed," [St. Louis County police described in a tweet](#).

A second tweet from St. Louis County police showed windows smashed in and a set of doors shattered. Police said all non-essential workers evacuated the building.

 **St. Louis County PD**  
@stlcountypd

Here's a look at the damage that's been done at the Ferguson Police Department. All non-essential personnel have evacuated the building.



209 11:21 PM - May 30, 2020

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The protests left seven officers injured by rocks, bottles and fireworks, St. Louis County police said Sunday morning. Three of them were taken to a local hospital with non-life-threatening injuries, while the other four were treated at the scene.

St. Louis County police shared a photo of the helmet one of the officers was wearing when they were hit in the head with a heavy object. The photo showed a large dent in the helmet.

 **St. Louis County PD** @stlcountypd · May 30, 2020

Here's a look at the damage that's been done at the Ferguson Police Department. All non-essential personnel have evacuated the building.



While live on the air, repeated popping sounds could be heard in the audio from 5 On Your Side's crews. It was unclear whether the sounds were gunshots, fireworks or something else.

"Orders to disperse have been given numerous times due to an unlawful assembly. Protesters continue to throw fireworks and rocks. Now there are reports of shots fire," [St. Louis County police tweeted](#). The county police department was on the scene helping Ferguson respond to the protests.

5 On Your Side's Casey Nolen reported if police were issuing orders like that "there will be arrests now or other means of forcing people to break this up."

*Watch 5 On Your Side's full on-air coverage from Saturday night by clicking here.*

At about the same time the popping sounds could be heard, Ferguson police officers wearing full riot gear left the parking lot where they had been standing arm-to-arm for hours. They rushed the crowd that was gathered across the street in an attempt to break up people who were gathered there.

"I was really scared last night, I'm used to walking late at night with my dog and saying hi to people so it's like what's changing? What's changing? And it just can't stay this way, it can't," said Ferguson Resident Bette Davis.

*WATCH: Here's what it looked like as police clashed with protesters in Ferguson Saturday night*

Here's what it looked like as police clashed with protester...



5 On Your Side's Robert Townsend reported that was the first time Ferguson police left the parking lot since the protests began outside the police station at about 6 p.m.

The mayor issued the curfew at about 11:40 p.m. Saturday. As the clock ticked past midnight, hundreds of protesters remained outside the Ferguson Police Department. It's unclear if the protesters knew about the curfew.



St. Louis County PD  
@stlcountypd

This is the damage done to an officer's helmet after they were struck with an unknown object. At this time, 2 officers were injured and transported. 2 others were treated at the scene for minor injuries.



110 11:45 PM - May 30, 2020

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At least 11 police and fire vehicles were also damaged. One of them was damaged by a bullet and the others were hit with rocks and debris.

Robert Townsend also witnessed protesters smashing the windows of Italian restaurant Vincenzos, which is next door to the Ferguson Police Department on South Florissant Road. He said looting had begun.

About an hour after reporting that, 5 On Your Side's Casey Nolen drove along South Florissant Road and pointed out some other businesses and empty storefronts also had their windows shattered. Some other businesses were not damaged.

"This is nothing like what we've seen around the country in terms of looting," Casey described.

At about 12:30 a.m., while parked in front of Vincenzos, 5 On Your Side saw two protesters try to light what looked like a molotov cocktail on fire. While trying to get the item to ignite, [a man ran up to the protesters and repeatedly yelled at them, "Not in my community!"](#)

The men continued to try to light the device on fire for several minutes. Police then launched a tear gas canister at the men and the small crowd that was nearby.

**RELATED: 'Not in my community!' | Onlooker confronts man attempting to light fire outside Ferguson business**



A couple hours earlier Saturday, Missouri Governor Mike Parson declared a state of emergency and activated the National Guard due to civil unrest from protests.

Parson has activated the National Guard and Highway Patrol to be able to assist local authorities.

**READ MORE: Missouri Gov. Parson declares state of emergency, activates National Guard due to 'civil unrest'**

"We are deeply saddened by the tragic death of George Floyd. We are also saddened by the acts of violence that have transpired across our nation and state in response to this event. At this time, we are taking a proactive approach to protect Missouri and its people," Parson said in a statement.

In the release, the Governor's office said there were many peaceful assemblies happening in Missouri, but there are others that have "created conditions of distress and hazards to safety, welfare, and property of residents and visitors in our communities that are beyond the capacities of local authorities."

**READ ALSO: Protests continue in the St. Louis area Saturday amid the death of George Floyd**

Protests started at 3 p.m. Saturday in Clayton. A crowd marched down Forest Park Parkway and eventually ended up in University City.

Friday night, a stretch of the interstate in the heart of downtown St. Louis was closed as protesters marched.

The shutdown started at about 11:30 p.m. Friday night and ended at around 3 a.m. on Saturday.

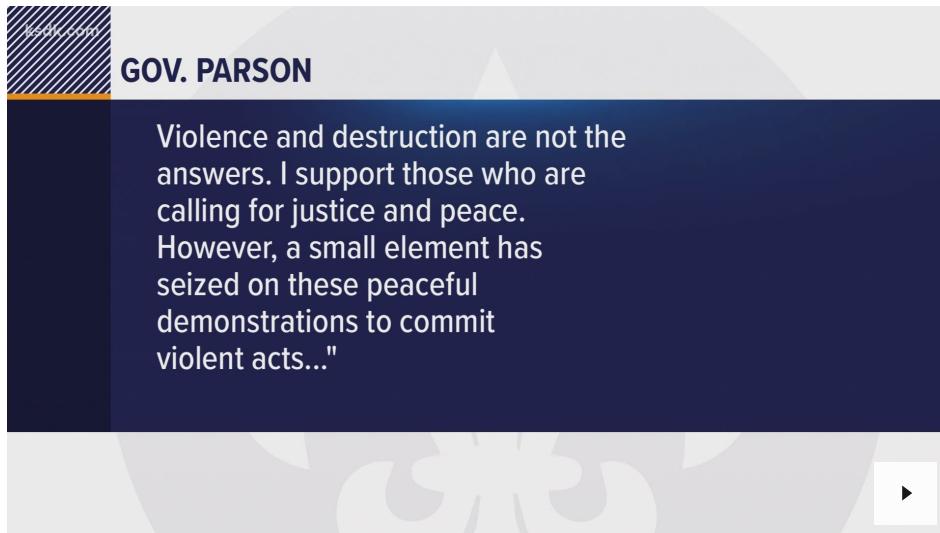
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Just after 2:19 a.m., a protester was dragged by a FedEx semi-truck as it moved slowly in the area of North Broadway and O'Fallon Street. Onlookers screamed as they saw the man caught underneath the truck.

Video: Protests in Ferguson over George Floyd's death | kSDK.com  
He was taken to an area hospital where he was pronounced dead.

**RELATED: Video: Protester dies after getting caught under FedEx truck as it moved through crowd in St. Louis**

*As a note, 5 On Your Side's crews were in their vehicles while reporting from the scene.*



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